

State of the City Address
Mayor Susan Narvaiz
October 14, 2010

“Service for a Season”

Good evening! Thank you, Dr. Moore for being with us tonight as MC for the 6th annual State of the City address.

We do have many special people here tonight. In fact I am certain that most everyone present has contributed to our story in some way.

Please join me now in recognizing our former, most honorable mayors that are with us tonight: Please stand:

Mayor Eddy Etheredge (who is also a former Hays County Judge)

Mayor Robert Cavazos)

Mayor Kathy Morris could not be here as she is on a special anniversary trip but her son Carter Morris is here on her behalf)

Mayor Billy Moore

Mayor David Chiu

Are there any former council members who served with these mayors here tonight? Please stand if you served on city council prior to 2004.

We know that your decisions were made with us in mind, even when you did not know who “us” would be!

Thank you for the hard work and passion for making the future brighter for others by your public service.

All that has come after your time on the dais is every much your success as it is ours, those who fill theseats today.

We honor you for sowing so much of yourselves into who we have become.

I thank you for being here on this special occasion for our city and for me personally. My hope, for the time we share tonight, that we will find that collectively, we have laid a strong foundation for the future and

I am pleased to report that **we** are standing; **your city** is standing on **good ground**.

Tonight's address is also serving as the official launch for the new San Marcos Brand and tagline.

I hope you've had a chance to see a sampling of the promotional items that will be used to send our brand message from the Convention & Visitor Bureau, Economic Development, Community Organizations and the City of San Marcos.

I understand there are even chocolate bars out there with our new brand.

Your city council asked a group of volunteers who labored very hard over the past year to work with the community to create a new brand. Your council set aside hotel occupancy tax, a tax collected from visitors to our hotels, for several years in preparation for this work. Yes we planned and saved.

It was a tough process – San Marcos is a highly engaged community of citizens—and you readily let us know what you think!

And we love that about you! In fact we love your company!

After much research, conversations with citizens & stakeholders, surveys, focus groups, public viewings and many discussions—with the excellent help of our consultants, Hahn Texas and KGB Texas and a **unanimous** vote of your council-- San Marcos has a new brand!

The dictionary defines company as:

- “the state of being with other people”
- “A unit of firefighters” Are there any fire fighters in the house? How about Police and EMS or other first responders please stand. Thank you for your willingness to run towards harm to protect us when most would not.
- Company is defined as “a business or business enterprise” and
- “those members of a business who are not included in the firm’s name”
- Even “a unit of soldiers usually consisting of two or more platoons” Speaking of soldiers, tonight we have some very special guests with us, please stand as I call your name, they are Andrew Miller-10\19\10, Joshua Shaw-10\20\10, Darrien Moore-10\26\10, Juan A. Lopez-11\9\10, Noel Calderon- 11\23\2010, Austin Jenkins-12\1\2010, Trevor Schnieder 2\1\2011 *(dates they are leaving)* who have made the commitment to serve our country in the US Army and will begin their enlistment by years’ end.

Please accept this small token as a sign of support from your hometown community and we send our prayers for your success and safety as you stand to defend our freedom.

Would their recruiters and all other Veterans and Active Duty Armed Forces Members and members of our Veteran's Advisory Board please stand and let us honor you for your service.

For many people, company is who comes to see you to share in the important moments of your life, family may visit to share a meal, friends to share a song, business entrepreneurs come to share an idea, visionaries come to share a purpose.

I would say that San Marcos makes for very good company but don't take my word for it, listen to what others say about us:

- Business Week Magazine designated San Marcos as one of the "Top 10 Places to Raise Kids" in 2010.
- San Marcos is the seat of Hays County -the third top county for job growth in the U.S. —as reported recently by CNNMoney.com
- The Austin-Round Rock- San Marcos MSA has one of fastest job growth rates in the nation over the past year at a rate of 2.5%
- Most recently, in the October 2010 issue, Ebony Magazine listed San Marcos as one of the top 15 "Family Friendly" "ideal places to raise kids." Citing Texas State University, cultural opportunities and the wonderful outdoor offerings in San Marcos.

Please help me recognize and thank the Branding Task Force and our consultants:

Melissa Millecam come forward please.

Would Chair Pam Couch and Council members Kim Porterfield and Chris Jones, Donna Hill, Stan Woody, Kelly Franks, Melani Ferrari, Joel Williams, Commissioner Debbie Gonzales Ingalsbe, Hahn Texas and KGB Texas come forward?

Presentation to Branding Task Force

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The new brand serves as an invitation to citizens, to our neighbors, to visitors, to new students, and to new businesses to come be in our good company.

Thanks to our beautiful natural environment, the spring-fed San Marcos River, our Historic Downtown—and to our thriving outlet malls—we are one of the top tourist destinations in Texas, with an estimated 11 million visitors coming here during the year.

San Marcos is home of Texas State University—the 5th largest public university in Texas, with a record enrollment of 32,586 students this fall, up 5.8% over the

last year. Texas State has become a Hispanic serving institution—with more than 25% of the undergraduate student body Hispanic.

The university is a welcoming institution of opportunity for all Texans!

Come build your dreams with us because we are sowing on good ground.

Tonight we will share in the harvest of all that tilled the soil before us, who plowed the field along side of us and prepare to reap from what has been sown by many who promote, encourage and produce.

We will account to you, our citizens for our policy decisions and their results, we will acknowledge our areas of challenge, celebrate our many successes and we will begin to usher in a time of change

Are you ready?

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Tonight I am recognizing some very special families who have contributed generations of parents, children and grandchildren to business enterprises in San Marcos. Their stories go back a long way.

Nearly one hundred years ago and now one thousand thirty six years of combined operating experience later, San Marcos has a diverse business sector, These businesses represent what happens when families risk all they have to make a way for themselves—and while they are at it, **they make a community.**

Their stories begin right here in our town as early as 1917 with a shoe repair shop where pistols, like the six shooter, were traded by actor Tom Mix or where AL Lettieri could find pigskin boots or George Strait would have his heels changed out.

Speaking of George Strait, he lived across the street from his favorite taco hut and it was there he was told by the owner – **“you only need one good song to make it big!”**

And guns...there is a lady realtor who opened up in 1978 and had no fear. She wasn't afraid of being a woman in a man's world --or the time she went to see a foreclosed property and the previous owners sneaked up on her from behind and pulled a gun on her. She told them “put that gun down”! It worked. She is still with us I am glad to say.

I do know that if something had gone wrong that you could find one of the oldest burial companies in the US right here. Beginning in 1897, Willard and his family would see to it that you got a proper service and continues to do so today.

Another long-time San Marcos family established a real estate company, helped to develop Sunset Acres and was one of the first members of the Board of Realtors. He even let the producers of "The Getaway" blow up one of his buildings.

Years later, another realtor came to town and brought in some competition. He was a 3rd generation master rock mason and graduated from our local university, I hear that he still does some rock work all these years later.

From a jeweler who once traded farm goods for repair services with a cash register that said turkey and eggs on its' keys --to the Canadian Football player who made it convenient to find groceries and now fuel ---to the electric company that designed the outside lighting for Old Main and converted the cotton gins from water wheels to electricity, these small to big businesses offered dry cleaning services that made you feel like royalty and another whose name commemorated the victory of WW II.

If you needed your car repaired and repainted, concrete for big road projects or building supplies for a few homes, help was available. You could have a really good "Mexican" dinner for an affordable price at this popular restaurant if you don't mind the long line or you could stop in for great barbeque with Steve McQueen and Ali McGraw or just to get the six chopped beef sandwiches for 99 cents for students.

You can find a Union Mason turned general contractor to banker or a man who started the local telephone company. If you needed advertising, outdoor was the way to go and if you had eight hours while at the old Camp Gary you could find your way to the local bowling alley for a few games.

You could find everything you needed -- even some high tech heat tracing developed by a man who loves vintage automobiles. From as far back as 1897 to 1989, these families represent a segment of the entrepreneurs that formed the early economy. Collectively they created over **3,921** jobs. They labored and tilled the soil. They prepared the field where seeds fell on good ground and yielded a legacy for all of us....

These are just a few of their stories.

To recognize their place in our history I am introducing the Legacy Award

The word legacy means something that is handed down or remains from a previous generation or time:

All of these have created legacies.

Presentation of the Legacy Awards

1. The Sherrerd Family(Dave and Julie), Gift Shop Jewelers

2. The Mendez Family (Phillip & Ronnie), Landis Shoe Clinic
3. The McCoy Family (Frank,Emmett,Brian & Megan), McCoy's
4. The Breihan Family (Ted, Jaimy & Stacy), Breihan Electric
5. The Martinez/Suarez family (Aurelio, Armando & Gloria), Victory Cleaners
6. The Burdick family (Dick, Mark & Richard), Thermon & recently Dick's Classic Garage with son-in-law Richard Skidmore.
7. The Ingram Family (Bruce & Earl), Ingram ready Mix
8. The Gomez Family (Jesse, Gilbert and Martha Salas), Royal Cleaners
9. The Gilbert Family (Bob Pollard, George, Gary and Bary Gilbert), Sunset Bowling
10. The Gunnarson Family(Ivar, K im and Leela), Gunnarson Outdoor
11. The Warren Family (Garland & Janelle, Blair, Blake, Cheryl and Caleb), Sac N Pac
12. The Fuschak Family (Bonnie, Shirley , Danny amd Morgan), Fuschak's
13. The Carson Family (WC, Chris and John David), Carson Properties
14. The Rizk Family (Herbert & Dora, Herbert Jr,Bobby, Anthony & grandchildren), Herbert's Taco Hut
15. The Gilmore Family (Terry & Carolyn, Zachary), Gilmore Companies
16. The Diane Sanders Family (Diane, Mary Evans), Coldwell Banker Real Estate
17. The Morris Family (Randall & Kathy, Carter John), Randall Morris & Associates
18. The Valdez Family (Ernie, Paul Ernest III), Ernie's Paint and Body Shop
19. The Pennington Family(Willard& Edra, Bill, Kristin), Pennington's Funeral Home
20. The Garcia Family (Curtis & Antonia, Celina & Johnny Yberra, Curtis Robert), Garcia's Mexican Restaurant
21. The Price Family (HY, Pat, Steven), San Marcos Telephone Company

As I gathered each of their stories, and they are heartwarming, I gained a greater understanding of the importance of committing to a strong economic development plan as a community. It reminded me why every job, at every level has an important place in the long term prosperity for a city.

For as long as I have served on the city council expanding Economic Development and job creation has been one of your top five goals and it has had my full attention and it is why Expanding economic development is the first of the five goals of your city council.

Economic Development is followed by

1. Improving the Image of San Marcos
2. Enhancing the region's transportation grid
3. Improving collaboration with San Marcos and regional organizations
4. Supporting environmental protection and smart growth

These goals were adopted **unanimously** by your council two budget cycles ago after your feedback from our last formal citizen summit.

These goals are used to guide policy, direct the allocation of tax revenues and deliver the level of services that you have told us are important to you.

And here is how we performed when comparing to where we were in 2004 to where we are in 2010.

- Taxable Property grew from \$1. 8 Billion to \$2.62 Billion
- Property Tax Revenue grew from \$3,694,026 to \$5,514,314
- Sales Tax Revenue grew from \$13,392,833 to \$18,511,430
- Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue grew from \$850,261 to \$1,589,334
- Registered Voters went from 23,572 to 25,661
- Road Lane Miles expanded from 224 miles to 261.22 miles

Our Tax Rate was increased once from .4710 per \$100 to .5302 per \$100 when you, the people, went to the polls in 2005 and gave us your approval.

The fund balance or savings account for the General Fund is stronger today at \$13.6 million from a 2004 total of \$7.4 million.

The percent spent on personnel to operate the city and deliver your services grew by 1.2%

Since 2000, San Marcos has grown by 20,000 people to nearly 54,000. That is an increase of 55% over the past decade and an annual growth rate of 4.5%

Our economic picture has improved, but not without making a commitment to staying focused and doing the necessary, sometimes difficult things.

This has been one of those challenging areas for us, that we have not all always agreed. So I want to spend a few minutes providing a snapshot of how our policies have kept our local economy steady during a time when many other cities, states and our nation have faced deficit budgets and turbulent times:

From 2004 to date or over the past six years your council has entered into 13 Economic Incentive Partnerships. That is a little more than two a year.

- We utilized \$30. 6 million of projected new property tax and sales tax revenues to leverage \$232.3 million of new investments for our community.

These investments are deposited in our city by improved public and private property infrastructure, payroll tax expansion, property tax revenue increases, increased sales tax and commercial personal property tax generation.

- The smallest agreement was for \$22,661 with the Texas Coaches Association to the largest with John Q. Hammons for this Conference Center at \$18.1 million.

Here is who we partnered with:

- El Milagro Tortilla Factory (Parkview Metal Bldg)
- TB Woods Expansion
- Grifol's – with 190 new positions
- HEB Distribution creating 320 jobs /\$16.2 mil in estimated payroll dollars
- The Masters School Expansion
- CTMC Expansion
- Clovis Barker Business Park
- San Marcos Vista Partners
- Creekside, Ltd (Stonecreek)
- CFAN Expansion
- John Q Hammons
- Lincoln Red Oak Village
- Texas Coaches Association

These agreements represent the creation of new jobs and the retention of current positions held by our family, friends and neighbors.

- We have added **8,566** jobs since 2004
- Added an incentive category for micro and small businesses Expanded our economic toolbox by adding more options like the Freeport Exemption and a Sales Tax Rebate Policy
 - We estimate that 6 companies receive a total of \$234,900 in Freeport Exemption tax savings.
 - The City council implemented a sales tax rebate policy that allows the use of a rebate of all or a portion of new sales tax generated by a business that qualifies. Our first rebate partnership with Prime Outlets was so successful that the \$3 million rebate the City offered as a rebate sharing was paid in three years rather than the five year's we projected it would take.

Today we are reaping the benefit of that one expansion with additional revenues of **\$1** million a year in sales tax.

- This type of agreement was also utilized for Stone Creek which will see a rebate as they generate new sales tax revenues from their growing retail shopping center.
- Our agreements include performance benchmarks and caps based on projected new tax dollars earned and limit the time in which the agreement is in effect.

We created a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) when we built this conference center a joint project of the City and Embassy Suites. We are using revenues generated by the hotel and conference center to retire the debt on the project. The hotelier is paying a third of the cost of the conference center and the rest is being repaid through revenues generated by the project and tourism—**not by local taxpayers.**

- Later tonight you will meet the community members who formed Partners in Progress and worked diligently over the past year to commission an economic study for the greater San Marcos Area.
- Many serve on the city board that oversees our economic activity and provide recommendations to the council as we consider many of the agreements we just discussed for new development and job creation.
- Some of their findings led to new strategies for attracting businesses in health care, corporate & professional operations, materials science & advanced manufacturing, and supply chain management

I am certain that it has been our willingness to think differently and work cooperatively with the private sector that has placed San Marcos in a sound financial position now and into the future. It has sent the message that we are open for business.

Your council has invested well and the return on these partnerships has secured a strong economy for our people with new opportunities to increase their standard of living.

How many of you were 18 or older in 1987?

You might remember going to the polls 23 years ago when the people of San Marcos voted to dedicate its half-cent sales tax to reduce property taxes while cities all around us choose to use their half-cent sales tax to fund economic and community development.

Its implementation by the City Council over the years has provided an annual tax break or tax incentive for

- Property owners —of homes and businesses alike—and has resulted in BIG annual tax reductions that amount to millions of dollars of savings every year. In fact in 2010 alone, the half-cent sales tax reduced our combined property tax payments by \$6.1 MILLION dollars, saving every homeowner and property owner a substantial sum.
- That is great news for us individually but other communities, which compete with us to land great jobs for their people, use their designated millions to fund their incentive programs.

That same \$6.1 million a year, if designated for economic and community development would have generated \$36.6 million over the past 6 years. Those funds would have more than paid for our 13 incentive partnerships that are projected to be \$30.6 million.

The point to remember here is that while we do not have a designated tax to help attract companies to generate jobs we have directed policies to ensure, when needed, that we have the financial ability to be in a strong competitive position. We also have more flexibility to direct those dollars to other community priorities.

And we have.

We have equally sent tax dollars back to our taxpayers providing tax relief when possible through some of the following specialized programs

- Tax exemptions for elderly and disabled homeowners—that save some 1,471 citizens an estimated \$193,400 a year.
- Human Services programs \$440,000 today to help agencies provide services to the most vulnerable and needy in our community. Our lifeline program offers utility bill payment assistance when needed to help the elderly and others. This has been funded at approximately \$189,500 over the last six years.
- Conservation programs that provide our residents with thousands of dollar a year in rebates and savings for green energy and water conservation appliances and programs.
- We have provided or a total of \$393,254 over the past six years to community organizations that host our most loved, family-oriented events like Sights and Sounds, Summerfest and the Veteran’s Day Parade.
- Since 2004 we have allocated \$353, 312 to support the arts and we are now witnessing the wonderful expansion of public art and special projects across San Marcos.

I hope you won’t mind if I brag a little bit and mention some of the monumental projects we, as a community, have achieved in recent years:

- Embassy Suites/ City of San Marcos Conference Center –helping us become a center for local, regional and state conventions
- Rio Vista Falls – reinventing a collapsing dam into a beautiful whitewater park in 2006

- The Wonder World Drive Extension – a beautiful parkway that improves mobility and relieves our historic neighborhoods and downtown of heavy through-traffic demonstrating that progress furthers preservation.
- Railroad overpasses on Wonder World Drive and Yarrington Road
- Fire Station # 5 –the new headquarters for our fire department
- Spectacular parks and green space acquisitions and projects that increase parkland from 594 to 1,700 acres today.

These projects include Spring Lake Preserve, Purgatory Creek Preserve, the Skate Park, the Tennis Courts, Sculpture Gardens, and the Five Mile Dam Soccer Complex.

- Notably, *private developers* have donated 403 acres of parkland to our community.
- The City of San Marcos has many major projects in process, with 10 under construction at this time.
- Neighborhood improvement projects include:
 - Rio Vista Terrace
 - Victory Gardens
 - Comanche water line
 - McCarty Lane—for safer access to our beautiful new San Marcos High School
- Downtown Master Plan and the resulting drainage, streetscape, parking and mobility improvements
- Airport Tower –dedicated Saturday --and new Northside development project that will expand the access and facilities for general aviation in the region.

Whew, we have been busy!!

Here are the council stats for last Year:

- 43 meetings
- In the past year, the City Council held 43 regular meetings, special meetings and workshops. We took up 494 items and collectively cast 3, 458 votes on resolutions, ordinances and other items.

- Of all those votes, 88.3% of the time we were unanimous in our decision-making. These numbers mean that your city council agreed on most issues—and had some healthy debate on others.
- One of the important matters we agreed on was our unanimous selection of our new City Manager after a national search.

Jim Nuse is the highly acclaimed City Manager of Round Rock—the other anchor city in the Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos MSA.

Jim brings a wealth of experience to San Marcos after helping Round Rock grow from a sleepy town of 13,000 people in 1983 when he started there in Public Works—to a bustling community with a population of more than 100,000 today!

He will start work on December 6. Jim Nuse—welcome to San Marcos!

I want to thank my colleagues for their dedication to this important task of selecting a City Manager, even while under fire, and Kay Stroman for her assistance in bringing forward excellent candidates

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- Today our budget for this fiscal year is \$147,782,007
- We are keeping the same tax rate of 0.5302.
- The average homeowner's tax bill will decrease by \$5.62 due to the reduction in the average home value from \$119,462 to \$118,402.
- Electric rates increased by 1.4% so the average residential bill will be \$1.85 more. The increase supports operations, capital projects and investments in the system. We rates remain competitive and at the low end compared to other Central Texas electric utilities.
- Water and wastewater rates will remain the same.
- Drainage Utility Rates will increase by an average of \$1.66 a month. These funds are used to mow ditches and rights of way, build storm sewer projects and maintain drainage facilities across the city.

- We are implementing a combination program of merit based and 1 % market based increases to the wages of our non-civil service employees. This is being funded by cutting costs in other areas without a reduction in service to you our customers. We are also funding our second year of Civil Service compensation program.

Speaking of our employees, there have been a couple of exceptional leaders for the City of San Marcos who have seen us through much change and transition in recent years

Would Laurie Moyer, Collette Jamison please stand?

Both of you have served the San Marcos community as Interim City Managers. You have helped the City Council and staff maintain our momentum, stay on track, and keep a high level of morale.

Our City Council, community –and your staff members—are grateful for your dedication, perseverance, experience and leadership.

Would Jimmy Venable please stand?

For every successful event that the City of San Marcos has—Jimmy is behind the wheel of a pickup truck hauling tables, chairs and a podium, or driving a “Mule” to transport people all over the place.

Jimmy Venable, our Parks Maintenance Supervisor, is the man behind so many of our successes.

Is our City Fire Marshal and head of our Emergency Operations Center, Ken Bell here?

I know that many people are astounded by Ken’s energy—his ability to be nearly everywhere at once, to go days without sleep—and his determination to solve problems and prevent disasters.

But when we have a disaster—a major fire, flood, train derailment, tornado, hurricane, or environmental spill – Ken is there to help guide our emergency operations and you would not want anyone else.

While not all of the 557 regular employees are here, those that are would you please stand?

To all our city employees: each and every day it is you who keep our city running. You ensure that our city is safe and secure, that our citizens have reliable electricity and clean water for their daily use. You maintain our roads, parks and recreation systems, and you deliver superior service to every person who accesses their city government.

You have designed, implemented and labored to complete the work of the people. You have made a difference in the lives of many with the skill that you are uniquely positioned to provide.

On behalf of the entire council we thank you for a job well done.

Because of your work and dedication I am pleased to report that **we** are standing, ***your city*** is *standing on good ground*

Tonight we are sharing in the harvest of all that tilled the soil before us, who plowed the field along side of us and prepared us to reap from what has been sown by many who promoted, encouraged and produced.

Since becoming mayor, I have had the privilege of meeting many of you. I have learned from you, laughed with you and been scolded by you. Those that scolded me know who I am talking about!

Tonight we will recognize the following with the annual Spirit of San Marcos Award:

Presentation of the Spirit of San Marcos Awards

1. Ollie Giles: Ollie Giles has become legendary in her detailed research into the genealogy and history of our African American Heritage in San Marcos. Her work over decades will create an ongoing legacy and better understanding of the families who created San Marcos and today contribute so much to our diversity and cultural assets. I am pleased to present to you the Spirit
2. Albert & Becky Sierra: I am proud to honor Albert and Becky Sierra for their many contributions to San Marcos as leaders in San Marcos and Hays County. Becky served as a Justice of the Peace for 30 years, retiring in 2002, and has been a trailblazer in San Marcos. Albert, who runs the Housing Authority, was also instrumental in urban renewal and community development. Thank you for your service.
3. Donna Hill --This remarkable woman has been a leader in business and communications for many years. She was public affairs manager for Time Warner in San Marcos, and has chaired the San Marcos Area Chamber of Commerce, the San Marcos Educational Foundation, and the Bobcat Athletic Foundation. She is even a former Texas State Strutter and a member of the Strutters Hall of Honor!
4. Ruben Garza –Southside Community Center: Ruben Garza is the dedicated executive director of Southside Community Center, a mission program of the United Methodist Church. For more than 85 years, Southside has been social service agency serving the

neediest of our residents. Southside operates Sunrise Village, a retirement center, a shelter for the homeless, a summer work camp where volunteers renovate homes, and an annual Thanksgiving dinner. Thank you Ruben for all that you and Southside do for San Marcos!

5. Debbie Gonzales Ingalsbe: I am happy to honor one of our hardest working public servants with a Spirit of San Marcos Award. She is Hays County's first female county commissioner, following in the tradition of her father, Ralph Gonzales who also served as Precinct 1 commissioner. Debbie has guided many partnerships between Hays County and the City of San Marcos—from road projects like McCarty Lane to the new soccer fields at Five Mile Dam.
6. Andy Sansom – On November 9, I am presenting a Spirit of San Marcos Award to Andy Sansom, one of the leading conservationists in Texas. Andy could not be with us tonight, but we will be honoring the achievements of the former executive director of Texas Parks & Wildlife and the current head of the River Systems Institute at Texas State.

I am also honored to present the Spirit of San Marcos Award to several organizations.

Organizations

7. San Marcos Lions (John Schramm): The Lions Club is the largest service organization in San Marcos and represents the spirit of service in all of their endeavors. As operators of the Lions Club Tube Rental on the San Marcos River, The Lions Club has generated tens of thousands of dollars for social service agencies and community service projects in San Marcos.
8. Council of Neighborhood Associations: Tonight I am happy to present the Spirit of San Marcos Award to CONA, the Council of Neighborhood Associations. For decades CONA has organized San Marcos neighborhoods and motivated individual citizens to become involved in city government and improving our community. I congratulate CONA for its dedication and commitment to improving the quality of life of San Marcos. I thank them for laying good ground as we move to a formal Neighborhood Commission that will work with CONA to help future councils on policy initiatives that support strong neighborhoods.
9. Centro Cultural de Hispano – Ofelia Vasquez Philo had a dream many years ago that she has brought to fruition with the help of a team of ladies that we all know and love. This year El Centro Cultural de Hispano opened at the old Bonham School. This cultural center highlights the impressive heritage of the Hispanic population of San Marcos—who has helped create the community we have today.

10. San Marcos Manufacturers Association (Laura Lucas) It is my pleasure to honor the San Marcos Manufacturers Association as it approaches its 30th anniversary year. The SMMA was founded in 1981 and is one of the oldest associations in Texas to be a forum for local industry to address common issues, support manufacturing, for civic involvement and workforce development with Texas State University, local schools, the Job Corps, the City of San Marcos and many other organizations.
11. Greater San Marcos Economic Development Corp/ Partners for Progress –This organization has transformed itself in the past two years to expand its reach and its impact on economic development. Forming a regional partnership in the midst of a down economy, Partners for Progress has created a new, non -profit organization to implement a sound economic development strategy.
12. Advanced Law Enforcement ALERRT we will honor ALERRT for its significant impact on public safety through its programs for law enforcement to combat domestic terrorism. They have had an astounding impact –most recently in the Fort Hood shootings and at the University of Texas—where gunmen attacked major institutions. The first responders who dealt with the situations had been trained by ALERRT.
13. Associated Student Government and Student Liaisons (Melani Ferrari, Colter Ray, Chris Covo, TX State Student Regent, Former Liaison and Current Liaison Tyler Johnson. ASG has become a true partner with the city in strengthening the town and gown relationship. These young leaders have taken to heart that they are San Marcos and they have helped to build understanding between students and non-student residents, They have lend their thoughts and perspectives to us as we seek to implement plans for those that will lead after us.
14. Texas State University Athletes This next group represents all student athletes and is instrumental in decision-making and implementation of all community events that the student athletes participate in. Some of the organizations benefitting from their volunteerism include: Hays County Food Bank, Hays Caldwell Women’s Center, Reading Programs at SMCISD Elementary Schools and many cancer programs such as Be the Match marrow drive, breast cancer awareness and collecting can tabs to help support cancer treatments. Welcome to the stage members of the Student Athlete Advisory Council. (Track- Jenna Lorentsen, Tennis-Nyssa Peele, Women’s Golf – Gabby De Reuck, Football – Steven Kenney, Softball- Macie Hair, Men’s Basketball-Tony Bishop, Women’s Basketball- Megan Homan (Kelsey Solis, Laurie Hindson, Don Coryell, Larry Tice)

Tonight we have honored those that built us, those that have serve us and those that protect us. We have said thank you to those that helped to preserve our natural assets and our heritage and we have acknowledged those that represent the next generation and those that have inspired us.

Next I would like to recognize those that have served with me since my first term in 2004

If you are here will all the honorables join me on stage as I call your name:

First the former Council members: Bill Taylor, Paul Mayhew, Jacob Montoya, Ed Mihalkinan, John Diaz, Daniel Guerrero, Betsy Robertson, and Pam Couch

And now my current colleagues: Gaylord Bose, (Suzanne flowers), John Thomaides, Chris Jones, Kim Porterfield, Fred Terry and Ryan Thomason

Before you stand the men and women that you elected to lead San Marcos during the past 8 and ½ years. They all stood up to take a volunteer job with high demands to serve:

They have demonstrated the definition of service: to provide a community with something it needs, to be a part of a body of people who carry out work for the public benefit.

Our accomplishments are many and it took all of us. We challenged each other, we debated each other. We set a new standard of civility in our city. Because of the collective leadership and vision we have perhaps presided over the greatest period of achievement in recent times and I honor each of you today, I thank you for supporting me even at times when you did not agree with me.

Please accept this Key to the City as a small memento of our time serving the citizens of San Marcos together.

As I begin my closing, I ask that my husband Mike join me here.

I ask that you join me in thanking him and my family for the great sacrifice they have made to allow me to serve in this capacity. You see they knew I would be all in when I made the decision to stand for this position and you elected me, not only once but four different times.

It has been with their love, guidance and a whole lot of tolerance and let's throw in some major patience too!

You see no one ever serves alone.

Add to your family, your friends, your church family, your supporters and it takes hundreds to keep you encouraged, to keep you grounded. They stay up nights with you as you mull over big decisions and they cry with you over the little things.

They take your call and drop everything, knowing that for a time you will not be as available to them as you once were because of your responsibilities to the people you took an oath to serve.

These are my people, these up here and many of you out there.

And I thank you for being the seeds that fell on good ground

I believe that we serve for a season

Encarta states that a High season *is to cause or enable somebody to gain experience and become more skilled, or to gain toughness and strength.*

Well it has been a high and wide season filled with plenty.

I have devoted my best ideas and most creative thinking and my passion for this city in the hope of serving well.

I have stood for you, and with you, and I have stood alone on issues.

I have stood firm in the field that I was planted

I have been amazed by the spirit of the people of San Marcos and I have been proud of the work that we put our hands to.

It has been a good work because God blessed me with all that I needed to fulfill this great purpose and He will bless you.

As my season ends, for many of you it is or may be the beginning of a season of serving.

So I ask, what will be your legacy? What seeds will you sow? What will you do with the inheritance that you are being given?

Will all the candidates that are running for city council that are here please stand?

Candidates (Kim, Dave, John, Daniel, Jude, Toby, Shane, and Rodney)

Continuing Elected Officials (Chris, Fred, Ryan)

Let this be an encouragement to all of you that can hear:

This is a change of seasons. This is a time for harvesting all that has been placed before you and if you are willing and of right heart you will do well.

I am handing the keys to the city to you, those that remain on the dais, those yet to be elected and those that may come later.

I look forward to the future with great faith in the commitment of our city staff, our new city manager and community leaders that will build upon this fertile ground.

I thank those that came before me and provided the broad shoulders that I stood upon and I thank you for welcoming me to city hall years ago, an average citizen who happened to become your mayor.

I go leave knowing with certainty that the best is yet to come!

Forward Progress, Higher Purpose. To God Be the Glory!